



1000 FRIENDS of Connecticut

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PUTTING THE GROWTH BACK IN SMART GROWTH

Testimony of Nichole Strack, Executive Director
1000 Friends of Connecticut
Transportation Committee

February 22, 2012

My name is Nichole Strack, and I am the Executive Director of 1000 Friends of Connecticut, a statewide coalition of Smart Growth advocates whose mission is to ensure a prosperous economy, a healthy natural environment, and distinctive, integrated communities with equitable access to housing, education and employment opportunities through well coordinated mass transit.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today.

I am here today in support of raised Senate Bill No. 111 *AN ACT CONCERNING THE PENALTY FOR CAUSING HARM TO A VULNERABLE USER OF A PUBLIC WAY*. The bill would establish and define a class of vulnerable users of a public way, and provide a penalty for any person who causes harm to that class.

According to a recent report by Transportation for America, Connecticut ranks 29th in the country as most dangerous to pedestrians and other vulnerable users, with the Hartford metropolitan area ranking the 2nd most deadly in the state. Senate Bill 111 would improve this statistic by deterring an invaluable number of preventable deaths. Furthermore, this bill would complement the 2009 Complete Streets legislation and would promote the prioritization of transit and non-motorized modes over driving to rebalance Connecticut's transportation system.

This bill does not require any additional revenue from the State for its enactment, nor does it absolve vulnerable users from safely utilizing roadway infrastructure. It does put our citizens walking in a \$30 pair of shoes on equal footing with those driving a \$30,000 vehicle and in effect, strengthens communities by creating more livable and walkable streets.

If passed into legislation, this bill will improve Connecticut's quality of place, making our state more attractive to the business community and more able to retain young professionals such as myself who want to live, work, and play without having to drive a car.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote in support of this bill. Thank you for your consideration.